skin color, and also because of the scratches which become caked, and 515
because of the sun's burning which wrinkles the almost scorched skin, especially on their shoulders; and finally because they go about barefoot and naked in the mud, through the underbrush and bushes, and as they lie down on the bare earth it is only natural that they should be covered with dust, just as we, who wash a thousand times a day do a thousand times become dirty again. They are not -- pardon the expression -- grubby, and I firmly contend that they are not dirty by nature.

An Indian camp is composed of an undetermined number of 342 [361]
dwellings, made by sticking branches into the ground and tying them together on top in the form of a cupola. Onto this frame they throw quantities of straw until it looks like, not a hut, but a wagon so loaded with hay as to cover the very wheels.

They hurl the straw from quite some distance and yet so accurately as to cause wonder, so much the more as it is the women who do this work. A hut, once finished, is so strongly constructed that a man can stand and move about upon it, and it is quite waterproof.

[177] Each chief has his own group of huts, like so many barracks, [622]
and sometimes, especially on the occasion of a declaration of war, many chiefs gather.

The huts are usually so low-ceilinged that one cannot stand up inside, but they vary as to length according to the rank of the family and the number of families which live in them. The long huts are somewhat humped, with two or more doors. The entrance ways are usually protected, on the windy side of the hut, by a fixed windbreak -- one must stoop in order to be able to enter.

A hut is divided into the following parts: the kitchens and the sections where sleeping, sitting, working etc. is carried on; however, there is no material separation between these parts.

The kitchen is nothing more than a swept space on which a fire [354]
is lighted, but only when the weather is cold or when the family mother is in mourning, during which time she does not leave the hut for a year, [765]
or allow herself to be seen, nor does she speak except when strictly necessary. The usual thing is to cook food outside near the entrance. There are as many kitchens as there are families.

The bedroom consists of that portion of the hut where they 352●
place skins and clothes, if they have any, upon which they lie and which they put on when they go out if it is cold. On the walls at the

head and at the foot of their rustic bed they hang their possessions, such as their bags, nets, etc., and some of their weapons. They sometimes stick four forked sticks into the ground, to a height of about a hand breadth above the surface, at the four corners of the bed, place two poles crosswise upon them and upon these, lengthwise, the necessary number of slats to make a sort of bedspring on which to spread skins and blankets. This type of bed is used particularly in the summer time in order to be cooler and to be free of insects and poisonous reptiles. The whites also customarily do the same thing, but they elevate their beds to a height of one or two meters above the ground to escape from tigers [jaguars--Translator]. I have slept on all of these types of beds and give my assurance that it is all a matter of habit -- nevertheless one can sleep much more comfortably on the ground. When the Indians break camp they burn all their huts.

In Mataco, "hut" or "house" is said in two ways: "hauet" and "hepp" ("h" as in the German "haus" or "c" in "Florence"). Now "hepp" also means "smoke," "steam," "mist" and a kind of plant which looks like mist at a distance; "hepp" is also the name of steamship. And now, begging the reader's indulgence, is not the analogy perfect between this Mataco idiom and ours: calling the family or house "home" and a steamship "steam"? This is one more mental approximation between the Mataco man and the Aryan man.

The spear is stood upright at the entrance to the house, and to one side are the bow and arrows, which lend a certain warlike appearance which [178] is pleasing. The houses are not constructed symmetrically, but nevertheless an attempt is made to leave, between each row of huts, a wide street-like space.

It is a pleasure to see their fires when they are cooking. On the very top are earthenware pots which contain various roots and wild fruits, which usually need several changes of water. Among these there is a type of bean which is both good and palatable, and a root which is between a sweet potato and an Irish potato. The pots are made and fire-hardened by the Indian women, who work them with care.

When the time for eating arrives, which, in the camp, is usually at eleven A.M. and at nightfall, fish on spits are brought out and crackle and hiss and smoke and drip in a way to make one's mouth water. On occasion a piece of meat from some animal will grace the